PARENTING WITH PURPOSE

FROM REMINDERS TO RESPONSIBILITY

HELPING KIDS BUILD EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

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The Kairos Bridge, LLC
Bridging relationships with Gospel truth

WHAT IS EXECUTIVE FUNCTION

Executive function is the brain's management system.

It allows your child to:

- Pause before acting
- Manage emotions
- Hold information in mind
- Plan ahead
- Start tasks
- Adapt when plans change
- Monitor their behavior
- Stay organized

These executive function skills develop gradually with the help of parental modeling, repetition, scaffolding, and co-regulation.

The brain is not fully formed until the mid- to late-twenties, which is why struggle does not mean failure; it means development is in progress.

THE 8 CORE EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SKILLS

Eight core skills are responsible for what we call *executive function.*

1 Impulse Control

What it is: The ability to pause before acting.
What struggles in this area look like:

- Interrupting
- Blurting
- Grabbing

Why it matters: Impulse control protects decision-making and relationships.
Practical Tools:

- Teach "Pause. Think. Choose."
- Practice waiting games (Red Light/Green Light)
- Build 5-second pause routines

2 Emotional Control

What it is: Managing big feelings so thinking stays online.
What struggles in this area look like:

- Meltdowns over small problems
- Giving up quickly
- Escalating frustration

Why it matters: Emotional control protects clear thinking and healthy relationships.
Practical Tools:

- Name emotions before solving problems (verbal grounding)
- Create an energy release and calm-down routine
- Practice breathing scripts

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3 Flexible Thinking

What it is: Adapting when plans change.
What struggles in this area look like:

- Rigid routines
- Difficulty with transitions
- "That's not fair!" reactions

Why it matters: Flexible thinking builds resilience and reduces anxiety when plans change.
Practical Tools:

- Practice using "Plan B" language throughout the day
- Intentionally change small routines
- Ask: "What's another option?" to invite them into the flexible thinking mode

4 Working Memory

What it is: Holding information in mind while using it.
What struggles in this area look like:

- Forgetting instructions
- Losing track of steps
- Starting but forgetting the goal

Why it matters: Working memory supports learning, follow-through, and independence.
Practical Tools:

- Use written checklists
- Have child repeat the instructions back
- Break tasks into visible steps

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5 Self-Monitoring

What it is: Awareness of performance and behavior.
What struggles in this area look like:

- Not noticing tone
- Repeating mistakes
- Surprised by consequences

Why it matters: Self-monitoring builds responsibility and personal ownership.
Practical Tools:

- Ask reflection questions like "How do you think that went?" or "What might you try differently?"
- Teach "Pause & Review" moments

6 Planning & Prioritizing

What it is: Setting goals and sequencing steps.
What struggles in this area look like::

- Waiting until the last minute
- Choosing easy tasks first
- Ignoring deadlines

Why it matters: Planning turns intentions into action and reduces last-minute stress.
Practical Tools:

- Teach backward planning
- Use weekly visual calendars
- Model time awareness

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7 Task Initiation

What it is: Starting without excessive delay.
What struggles in this area look like:

- Avoidance
- "I'll do it later."
- Staring at homework

Why it matters: Task initiation builds momentum and prevents avoidance from becoming a habit.
Practical Tools:

- Use the 2-Minute Start rule
- Body double (sit nearby)
- Set visible timers

8 Organization

What it is: Keeping track of materials and mental information.
What struggles in this area look like:

- Backpack chaos
- Lost papers
- Clutter overwhelm

Why it matters: Organization reduces overwhelm and frees mental energy for problem-solving.
Practical Tools:

- Create "homes" for items
- Weekly reset routine
- Use color-coded folders

THINK-PLAN-DO-CHECK

This framework is helpful for older kids. It frames the 8 executive function skills in a 4-step movement.

Think

- **Am I calm?** (Impulse control/pause)
- **What is the goal?** (Emotional control/regulation)
- **What do I need to remember?** (Working memory)
- **If this doesn't work, do I have a plan B?** (Flexible thinking)

Plan

- **What steps need to happen?** (Planning & Prioritizing)
- **What's first?** (Organize step and resources)

Do

- **Take the first step** (Task Initiation)
- **Then the next...and the next...** (working memory)

Check

- **How did that go?** (Self-monitoring)
- **Do I need to adjust?** (Self-monitoring)

BRAIN-BOSS

This framework is helpful for younger kids who love playful language. Think of Executive Function like your BRAIN BOSS.

B- Breathe *(Emotional Control)*

R- Remember *(Working Memory)*

A- Adjust *(Flexible Thinking)*

I- Inhibit *(Impulse Control)*

N- Navigate Steps *(Planning)*

B- Begin *(Task Initiation)*

O- Organize *(Organization)*

S- Self-Check *(Self-monitoring)*

S- Stay Steady *(Emotional Regulation)*

> Instead of saying "Why are you acting like that?"
> say, "Hmmm. I think your brain boss needs to step in."

This method shifts the tone from correction to coaching, which keeps the focus on the skill, rather than the character, thus reducing shame and inviting practice.

EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SELF-CHECK

We all have strengths and weaknesses in executive function. Use the checklist and reflection below to assess your own areas for improvement, then help your child assess theirs!

Circle 2 areas of executive function you would like to improve in:

Impulse Control Task Initiation Self-Monitoring

Working Memory Emotional Regulation Flexible Thinking

Planning Organization

Circle 2 areas of executive function you want to help your kiddo grow in:

Impulse Control Task Initiation Self-Monitoring

Working Memory Emotional Regulation Flexible Thinking

Planning Organization

Now Answer:

- **Which one causes the most stress for you?**

- **When does it show up most?**

- **What tool from this guide will you try first?**

EXECUTIVE FUNCTION ACTION PLAN

Day 1
Identify
Choose one executive function skill to target as a family.

Day 2
Model
Think out loud as you work on the task, setting an example for your kiddo.

Day 3
Scaffold
Help them make their own task lis, breaking it into small steps.

Day 4
Visualize & Initiate
Create one visual support like, a checklist or calendar & then get started!

Day 5
Practice Flexibility
Think through a "Plan B" moment

Day 6
Reflect
How did it go? What would you change?

Day 7
Celebrate!
Name at least one improvement you've seen in executive function.

Congrats! Repeat again next week.
Small repitition re-wires the brain!

Notice It · Name It · Nurture It ™

This is my signature framework, created to help parents recognize behavior patterns, understand the underlying needs, and respond in ways that support lifelong skill growth rather than simply forcing behavioral compliance.

Your child forgets instructions, avoids starting tasks, melts down when plans change, or seems overwhelmed by simple responsibilities. Instead of asking "Why aren't they trying?" begin asking, "Which skill might be lagging?"

Use verbal grounding & name the struggle with empathy:

- "It looks like getting started feels overwhelming."
- "Remembering all three steps is hard right now."

Naming the skill gap reduces shame and builds awareness.

Support development through modeling, scaffoling & co-regulation.

- Modeling: show how you plan, organize, and initiate
- Scaffold: provide checklists or break tasks into smaller steps
- Co-regulate: decrease pressure by narrating calmly and naming emotions

Skills grow when pressure decreases and support increases.

PARENTING **BOOKS**

Resources designed to strengthen your parenting and your personal journey. Discover tools that deepen self-awareness, resilience, and connection at home.

NOTICE IT ~ NAME IT ~ **NURTURE IT**

- This is the **cornerstone of the work** we do at The Kairos Bridge
- A simple **three-step framework that transforms everyday parent-child interactions**
- Born from divine inspiration to guide parents with clarity and purpose.
- Rooted in **scripture,** supported by **science** for a balanced, confident approach.
- Helps you understand, respond, and nurture your child's emotional world

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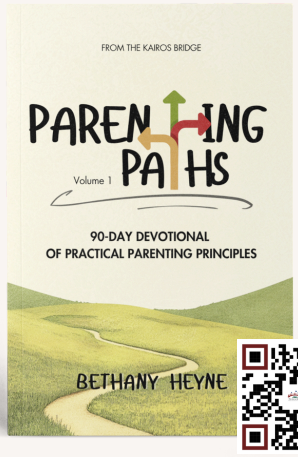

PARENTING PATHS - **VOL 1**

- This **90-day devotional** is an introductory look at some of the most common parenting topics — boundaries, discipline, emotions, communication, attachment, respect, responsibility, conflict & reconciliation
- It follows my signature method of teaching — **Principle, Application, Techniques for parents, Hope & Scripture**
- Want a deeper dive into one of these topics? Check out our other volumes.

PARENTING PATHS - **VOL 2**

- This volume of Parenting PATHS provides a deeper look at three foundational topics — **core needs in child development, parenting styles & traits, and the 7 Connecting Habits.**
- This **self-paced guided devotional** follows our standard PATHS framework while adding in an element of personal reflection for growth.
- **23 flexible topics** you can complete in your own rhythm
- Our **companion stickers** are a fun add-on that allows you to track your progress with regular reminders in a prominent place, like your favorite cup or notebook.

Hi and welcome!

Who Am I?

I'm **Bethany Heyne,** founder of **The Kairos Bridge.** I combine my love for Jesus, my background in **pharmacy & child psychology,** and my personal journey as a **mom and bonus mom** to help parents unlock the beauty of how God designed the parent-child relationship to flourish.

What Led Me to Parent Coaching?

My path **began in the world of science and medicine.** I spent years studying data, teaching future clinicians, and training people to think critically. But everything changed when I stepped into motherhood. Suddenly, the challenges were no longer textbook topics; they were bedtime meltdowns, emotional overwhelm, and the quiet pain behind a slammed door. Parenting revealed parts of my own heart that still needed tending.

Was There a Turning Point In My Story?

Yes. A season of **heartbreak and betrayal** stripped away the illusion of control and made me confront deeper emotional and spiritual roots. In that painful season, God revealed that the struggles I faced in my home weren't just about my children… **they were mirrors reflecting the unhealed places in my own heart.** That realization was the beginning of everything.

Why Did I Pursue Further Studies?

I returned to school to pursue my **Master's in Child Psychology & Development,** aiming to deepen my understanding of the emotional, spiritual, and developmental needs of children and their parents. I didn't pursue the degree for a title, but for transformation. And what I learned changed everything about how I parent, relate, and coach.

What Realization Changed My Life?

Our children cannot grow into what we do not first embody. Parenting is not about control; it's about becoming the example. The healing we allow God to do in us becomes the healing we pass on to our children.

Why Did You Start The Kairos Bridge?

When God asked me to begin this work, my initial response was hesitation: ***"Why me?"*** His answer was simple: ***"Because I invited you."*** The Kairos Bridge was born from that invitation —a calling to guide parents toward emotionally healthy, spiritually anchored, grace-filled family relationships.

BOOK NOW

I love coaching families to recognize what's Behind the Behavior, to move from Struggle to Strength and Confusion to Connection by Parenting with Purpose. Book your free consult now!